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Rev. George Duffield, D. D.

Commemorative Discourse.

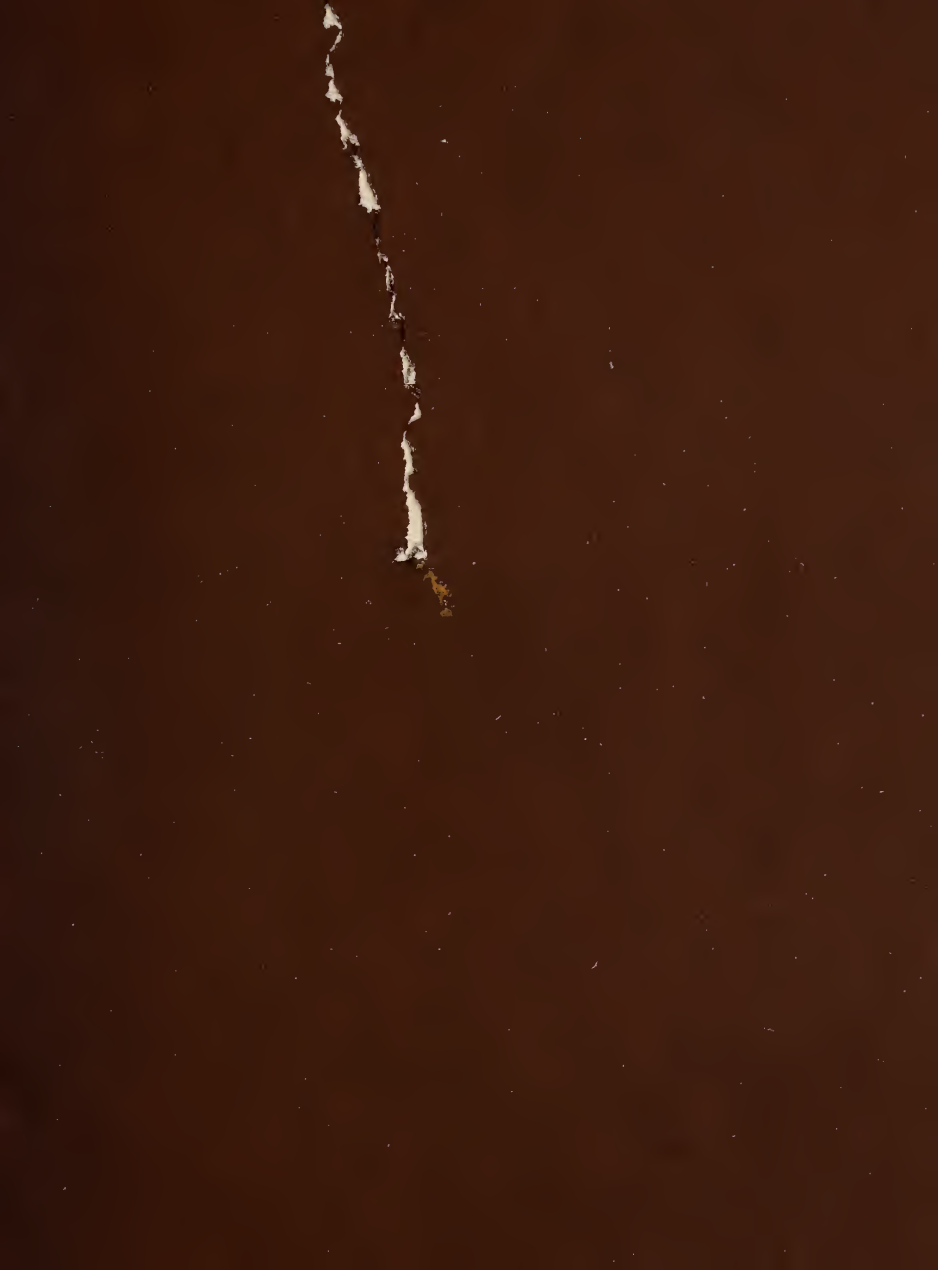
JANUARY 28th, 1883.

D. BETHUNE DUFFIELD.



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Gift of
James H. Russell

1875



DISCOURSE

COMMEMORATIVE OF

Rev. George Duffield, D. D.

DELIVERED IN THE

† *Memorial Church, Detroit, Mich., on January 28th, 1883,*

BY

W. H. Eby
D. BETHUNE DUFFIELD.

† [A Memorial Window in this Church bears the name of George Duffield, with his motto :
"Deo, Reipublicæ, et amicis, esto semper fidelis."]

DETROIT;

JOHN F. EBY & CO., BOOK AND JOB PRINTERS.

1883.

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Optima autem hæreditas a patribus traditur liberis, omnique patrimonio præstautior, gloria virtutis, rerumque gestarum.—Cicero de Offic. 1. 33.

Translated.—But the best inheritance transmitted by fathers to their children, is the glory of their virtue and noble deeds.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

DETROIT, February 2, 1883.

D. BETHUNE DUFFIELD, Esq.:

DEAR SIR—We, the undersigned, request that the interesting address commemorative of your revered father, Rev. George Duffield, D. D., delivered by you at the Memorial Presbyterian Church on the 28th ult., may be published, and so enable us to secure in a permanent form, this pleasing record of his life and services as a citizen, and preacher of the Gospel.

Respectfully yours,

GEORGE D. BAKER.
ZACHARY EDDY.
D. M. COOPER.
GEORGE V. N. LOTHROP.
J. S. FARRAND.
JAMES BURNS.
WM. K. MUIR.
JAMES McMILLAN.
JOHN S. NEWBERRY.
GEORGE PECK.
JOHN COLLINS.
JOSEPH LATHROP.
CHAS. I. WALKER.
JAMES D. WEIR.
ALEX. H. DEY.
HOVEY K. CLARK.
THOMAS PITTS, AND OTHERS.

WILLIAM T. SPROLE.
JAMES F. DICKIE.
P. R. HURD.
ROBERT P. TOMS.
ALANSON SHELEY.
JOHN OWEN.
EMORY WENDELL.
HUGH McMILLAN.
GEO. S. FROST.
GEO. B. PEASE.
ROBT. W. KING.
FRANCIS LAMBIE.
SAMUEL ZUG.
CHAS. C. TROWBRIDGE.
JOHN WINDER.
PHILO PARSONS.

FRIDAY, February 16, 1883.

HON. D. BETHUNE DUFFIELD:

I thank your friends heartily for permission to add my name to those upon the request, for the printing of your memorial address in memory of your honored father. I was one of his loving admirers during his long and useful life in Detroit, served with him as Regent of the University, and was present when he fell, with armor on. The record of such a life ought by all means to be perpetuated, as well in justice to the dead, whose good deeds are forgotten by the rushing crowd, as for the hopeful example to honest young men who desire to serve their generation.

Lovingly yours,

C. C. TROWBRIDGE.

REPLY.

MESSRS. GEO. D. BAKER, JOHN OWEN, WM. SPROLE, ROBT. P. TOMS, GEO.
V. N. LOTHROP, JAMES BURNS, and others:

GENTLEMEN—In response to your courteous request that the address recently delivered in the Memorial Presbyterian Church, commemorative of the late George Duffield, D. D., may be published, I beg leave to say, with due acknowledgment for your kind expressions in reference thereto, that I have to-day concluded so to do, and have placed the manuscript in the hands of the printer.

Very truly, your obedient servant,

D. BETHUNE DUFFIELD.

DETROIT, February 7, 1883.

Commemorative Discourse.

Alpine travellers, though often charmed by the passing beauty of a summer's sunset, are sometimes (though rarely), favored with a vision of what is called the "*Alpengluehen*," — before which all kindred scenes fade and disappear. A clear, but vaporous atmosphere, in which the snow-capped peaks may uplift themselves, stripped of the garniture of cloud and mist, is essential to this phenomenon. The declining day then takes to itself such a deep crimson hue, that the snowy helmets of the mountain giants stand out like masses of glowing coals. From peak to peak the glory of it flashes and is reflected, far as the eye can follow the billowy range; till like a flood of supernatural light it bathes the craggy slopes, and tips with a soft splendor the deeper shadows of the darkening valley. But soon, the heavenly illumination begins gradually to rise and recede from the lower levels,—changing

as it ascends, from the deep red into a more delicate shade of brilliant blue, and spreading the while, like a soft veil over the whole mountain, but still gently ascending, and yet ascending, until after a brief lingering upon the summit, it suddenly vanishes from sight,—and the rugged mountains again stand in their ordinary coloring, and the vision of beauty is no more!

It seems,—while this sunset hour throws its departing beams through yonder memorial window,—as though, in this brief service, we somehow stood in the lingering glow of that “light” which

“The good man leaves behind him,
Along the paths of men;”

and in the tender radiance of it, before it shall have lifted itself wholly from the mountain peaks of memory, we may appropriately recall some of the busy and brighter scenes, in the life of him whom we are here so kindly invited to remember.

In this brief sketch, no attempt will be made to eulogize, or portray at length, the life and labors, or the traits and tastes of the late George Duffield. The field is too wide, and the associations yet too fresh and tender. Our aim will be rather to outline, merely, his career, as a student, as a citizen,

and as a preacher of that Gospel, which it was his pleasure to proclaim for more than *fifty* years—and this sketch will be made of him as he was seen from the *pew*, by a layman, rather than from the *pulpit*, by one of his ministerial brethren.

He was born on the 4th day of July, 1794, at Strasburg, in the State of Pennsylvania, where his father's grandfather had purchased and settled a farm, as far back as 1730.

He was of Huguenot and Scotch-Irish descent, and so of pious ancestry—his mother a truly godly woman, his father a merchant, and elder in the Presbyterian church, and his grandfather, of the same name, a graduate in the first class who received diplomas from Princeton College, a minister of the Presbyterian church, and associate chaplain with Bishop William White, of the Continental Congress at Philadelphia.

The education of the subject of our sketch, was the *very best* then afforded in the Country. At the early age of sixteen, after a four years' course, he graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, located at Philadelphia; and in the same year, entered the Theological Seminary of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in New York; then

under the care of the celebrated John M. Mason, D.D., whose friendship he long enjoyed, and who, it may be remarked, was the *only* man of whom he seemed to stand in real awe.

It appears from the entries upon his private diary, that he did not become a church communicant until some time after he had entered upon his theological studies.

His license to preach was given him three months before he had attained his twenty-first year, and before the expiration of that year (1815), he had received and accepted a call from the Presbyterian church of Carlisle, Pennsylvania,—the same church over which his grandfather had been settled, and from which, in 1772, he had removed to the Pine street church of Philadelphia, in which he lies buried. Ere his grandson had left the seminary in the city of New York, his merit as a rising-young preacher had been observed, and a devout poet of the day, in some published lines, put into verse a prophecy concerning him, in these words :

“Duffield, thine artless eloquence shall win the soul.”

In his twenty-third year (1817) he married Isabella Graham Bethune, not yet seventeen years old, daughter of Divie Bethune, Esq., of New York city, and

granddaughter of Mrs. Isabella Graham, whose name and life is yet cherished in the annals of the Presbyterian church. He remained in Carlisle eighteen years and six months, gathering into his church during that time seven hundred persons by profession, and two hundred by certificate; making an average of about fifty persons during each year of his first pastorate.

In 1835 he removed to Philadelphia, and in 1837 to New York city, whence in the fall of 1838, on the invitation of the First Presbyterian church, he came to Detroit; commencing his labors on the first of October in that year, and closing them by his death on the 26th of June, 1868, a period of well nigh thirty years.

His installation by the Detroit Presbytery occurred on the 11th of December, 1838; and the population of this city at that time was only about seven thousand people.

The church building of the First Protestant Society then stood on the northeast corner of Woodward avenue and Larned street, having been erected in the year 1834, under a contract with Alanson Sheley, Esq., at a cost of thirty thousand dollars. It was of stately proportions externally, and spa-

cious and tasteful in its interior. Galleries surrounded its three sides, and the bell which swung in its steeple served, in its daily ringing and curfew call, the entire city. The church's session room was a separate one-story brick structure on the same lot, but directly north of the church edifice. In it the Sunday-school, and regular weekly church meetings were held, as also the annual meetings of the Society. It was also in those days occupied once a week by "The Detroit Young Men's Society," whose lectures and debates were then among the chief, and most attractive public winter entertainments of our citizens. On the night of January 10, 1854, this handsome church edifice was destroyed by fire, and thereafter the Society was divided into the three Presbyterian churches, now known as the "First," "Fort Street," and "Jefferson Avenue" churches; the First Congregational church having gone out from the mother church and organized as early as December 25, 1844.

When Mr. Duffield, however, assumed the pastorate in 1838, the congregation which weekly assembled in his church, was generally spoken of as the largest and finest in the then Northwest. There was a noble eldership connected with it, composed of such men as Eurotas P. Hastings, Benjamin F. Larned, Edward

Bingham, Robert Stuart, Jonathan Kearsley, David French, Horace Hallock, and Charles G. Hammond ; all of whom, save the last two, have already joined the Church above.

Detroit being then the capital of the State, the Legislature met here every winter, and the great majority of its members, as also a large part of our professional men, worshiped in connection with the First church ; so that there was scarcely an empty pew below, and very few unfilled in the galleries.

To such a congregation, the minister could not fail to bring his very best thought and efforts ; and it will be conceded, I think, that this was fully done by the new pastor. In addition to the regular Sunday morning and afternoon services, a series of religious lectures on some special subject was given in the evening, almost every winter, and being of an instructive as well as popular character, they were invariably well attended, and contributed largely to settle and shape sentiment on the controverted themes and topics of the time.

The history of Dr. Duffield's last pastorate is, in large part, of yet so recent date, and still so fresh in the memory of the older members of our churches, that it hardly seems necessary or proper, here to

recount it in further detail. It was interrupted in its course but once, and that only for a year (parts of 1852 and 1853), when Dr. Duffield, having been enfeebled by a severe attack of cholera—contracted by visiting and attending the funeral of its many victims that season—sought rest and recuperation abroad. Among other countries embraced in his journey, he visited Egypt and the Holy Land—a trip which had long been the dream and desire of his life; and the fruits of which he liberally shared with his people on his return.

Passing then from further historic narrative, we proceed to consider rather the individual man, as exhibited in his life at large.

Among his most prominent traits was his prodigious love of learning; not for that pertaining to his profession only, but for what was to be gleaned from all fields of knowledge. They who remember his face will recall this, as impressed upon his very countenance; showing an eager readiness either to receive or impart knowledge.

My earliest recollection of him is, when seated, generally in his study, but sometimes in the family sitting-room, with a child on one knee, and a heavy Latin or Greek folio on the other;—and the dining-

table, at meal hours, always disclosed a formidable volume, with open page, at his right hand.

In those days, say thirty or forty years ago, ministers did not have the cream of home and foreign commentators, condensed into English volumes at one dollar and twenty-five cents each, and their knowledge was got by *hard work*. But, as I remember some of these volumes, they were "*Calvini Opera Omnia*," "Venema on the Psalms," "Michaelis on Moses," "Vitringa in Isaiam," "Lampe in Joannem," and scores of others, all in Latin. A colossal Hebrew and Greek concordance,—tall and heavy as a babe of three years, lay ever at his hand with his Hebrew Bible,—and all costing, what then seemed to be almost fabulous prices, some as high as fifty or sixty dollars a volume. How it was, with his limited salary, the expenses of a large and growing family, and the running of a small country place, with every conceivable thing in the way of plant, tree and live stock upon it, that he could accumulate these rare and expensive books, was not only the puzzle of my youth, but still remains the unsolved conundrum of my maturer years.

His study was a marvel of miscellaneous accumulations; principally of books, pamphlets, manuscripts,

newspapers and magazines, bound up and loose. But round about were hung or grouped, barometers, thermometers and rain gauges ; garden tools, water-pots, pruning-knives, grafting-wax ; melon and flower seeds ; a stand of plants with cactuses of all varieties ; Turk's-heads, night-blooming ceres, century, sensitive and other *noli me tangere* sort of plants, standing about squirrel and bird-cages, both empty and full ; and a wide-spread litter of letters, and sermons, with a layer of profane coal-dust generally overlaying the whole. Conspicuous, however, on the leaf of his arm-chair, was his study Bible, and always open. It was a small-typed volume, whose *s*'s were *ff*'s, and *ff*'s were *s*'s, but which, with Canne's references, he continued to use to his last day. Upon its pages, scrawled on the back of some scrap or fragment of a wasted envelope, was almost always to be seen the notes or heads of his next sermon logically thought out and carefully arranged,—the “points of his argument,”—to be thereafter expanded and written out. There were no patent intellectual machines in those days, like “The Lay Preacher,” the “Homiletic Magazine,” etc., to furnish the minister with text and heads and subdivisions, illustrations and application, as by a turn of the crank ; but, as we have said, men

had to do their own hard thinking. His favorite method was to discover and work out the *rationale* of his theme, and then enforce it both upon the mind and conscience of his hearers. Except Saurin's, he read few sermons; but gathered round his chair, in jostling heaps, were piled his favorite teachers; the vellum-backed Fathers, Augustine, Justin, and the later scholars, Calvin, Luther, Melancthon, Erasmus, and others; long, long since dead, but still to him, apparently, a living and delightful presence. It was not their gems of thought, or flowers of rhetoric, he was seeking to cull; but their aid in helping him in his exegesis — for he was never satisfied until he had mastered, first, the literal meaning of his *text*, and then the text in the real spirit of the context. He, therefore, not only studied, but profoundly *meditated* over his theme; and when his conclusions were reached, they were *his own*, and not another's. And so, as his sermons continuously disclosed the freshness of his thought to his people, they could see, from year to year, not only of the travail, but also of the strong growth of his soul, in its yearnings, to bring men to the knowledge of what he heartily and honestly believed to be *the Truth*.

It was this independent thinking that led him into

an early examination of the ecclesiastical fortress in which he dwelt, and the character of the artillery he had been employing against the adversary. Accepting, at first, as well-nigh God-given, the theology of his day, he preached it without questioning its soundness. But, ere long, he discovered that his strong appeals to unconverted men were answered by false pleas of "*inability*," alleging, as they did, that *they* could not justly be blamed for an unbelief which resulted from a complete *want* of *power* to appreciate, or accept the *Gospel*; for *that* (with the atonement) was appointed, not for *them*, but solely and only for "*the elect*;" and so they sheltered themselves from his earnest appeals, by lifting over their heads the broad shield of orthodox technicalities.

This started him into earnest investigation of the very foundations of his inherited theology. Old methods of explaining the great facts of sin and pardon; old formulas assuming to solve the Spirit's inspiration, and its redeeming influence upon the hearts of men, grew more and more unsatisfactory to him, in his earnest endeavor to bring them in harmony with his modern knowledge and reflections; and the explanations of them by the philosophy of the 16th century (hitherto, in his junior years, accepted as

almost sacred) seemed altogether unsuited to the brighter and more progressive thought of the 19th century. At all events, they were not suited to *him*. He must find something better, and he did! So that after a while, he was enabled to rebuild his stronghold, and from the standpoint of a newer and better philosophy, to announce doctrinal statements which were liable to no such cavilling objections. These he both preached and carefully demonstrated, and with redoubled energy, urged upon the hearts and consciences of his hearers. His theology became progressive, ceasing to be in the straight line, or in the circle that returns hopelessly to its own starting point, it took, rather, the spiral form which rose higher and higher with each revolution.

And, not contented to retain for himself the fruits of his research and reflections, he at once put them into the form of what was, for those days, a very formidable book, and entitled it, "*Duffield on Regeneration.*" He was then about 36 years of age, and this was the manly way in which he launched it through the press to the world. I quote here his dedication page:

"To the members of his charge, the following disquisitions are *affectionately dedicated* as an

atonement for occasional attempts, in the early period of his ministry among them, to explain the great fact of *a sinner's regeneration*, by the aid of a *philosophy* imbibed in his theological education, and interwoven in many of his exhibitions of Scriptural truth, but for years past REPUDIATED by their much attached *Pastor*."

This, of course, is no place, nor is the speaker the proper person to present and discuss these views, new and old, which afterward convulsed and divided the Presbyterian Church. But they who can look back upon those days, can readily recall the effect of such an announcement upon the theological world as then constituted. It was like tinder touched to the powder magazine, and an explosion soon occurred under the very feet of the youthful author.

The venerable fathers of the Carlisle Presbytery at once descried this erratic comet on the ecclesiastical sky; and after subjecting it to telescopic view, resolved to convene in solemn assembly and definitely settle its character; whether a new star or a comet of baleful portent. Accordingly a meeting was called, a citation issued and served on the young and daring divine, who meanwhile was temporarily suspended from his clerical functions; and his trial for heresy

opened in his own and grandfather's church. The Court numbered some thirty or more members; and arrayed, as they all were, in the solemnity of black coats, with most imposing collars—and high white cravats, with stiffeners in them—they presented a truly formidable appearance. Their countenances, as I now recall them, wore a sort of *Jupiter Tonans* aspect, and seemed to proclaim to the surrounding laity, that they were of that race of men, whom some one has characterized, as “electing themselves to the care of other men's beliefs, and appointing themselves God's sheriffs to hunt and run down heretics;” and that the Westminster confession of faith, with “the larger and shorter Catechism,” were somehow, in this exigency, brought into imminent and unholy peril, and they must rally to their defense.

Once organized, allegations and charges were framed, and a committee appointed to prosecute. The accused appeared in his own defense, and promptly raised and argued various points, in the form of pleas, to the jurisdiction and constitutionality of the proceedings. But these, after having become involved and almost lost in a hazy cloud of most original discussion and conflicting opinions, were suddenly and summarily swept aside in a man-

ner altogether unknown to the rules and precepts of either *Common* or Parliamentary law, and, I am inclined to think, of the higher courts of Ecclesiastical law also. Evidence was thereupon offered in support of the specifications as set forth in the complaint; "common fame" being the accuser.

Two, and, as far as I can remember, only two, distinguished members (the Rev. Wm. R. DeWitt, D. D., of Harrisburg, and the Rev. John McKnight, of Shippensburg) ranged themselves as friends along side of the accused, and they proved themselves able and faithful champions also. Tri-daily sessions of the Court were held, and the main body of the church, together with its great galleries, were crowded by an interested and anxious audience, through three or four days and nights. Divers propositions and dogmas were preliminarily considered, and most elaborately discussed; and thereafter certain sentiments and views found in the obnoxious book, were examined and pronounced, by various debaters, sadly erroneous, and worthy of the severest condemnation. Much learning, and the most abstract metaphysical reasonings were indulged in by these accomplished divines, and there were not a few able men among them; and at last, after many tedious but exciting sessions, the end drew near.

Well do I remember the closing scene, boy though I was, and crowded half way up the pulpit stairs, where I sat, wondering, in my simplicity, if indeed my father was to be adjudged too *wicked* ever again to ascend them, and enter the great, mahogany-stained pulpit, with its gorgeous velvet cushion and magnificent, Russia-leather bible. It was an evening session, and the accused was called upon to speak in his defense, and solemnly asked if he "*had anything to say*" before the final vote was taken. The issue was a solemn one—it was simply this: Was the author of these "new views" to be cast out of his pulpit as a *heretic*, or should he be acquitted? The atmosphere of the Presbytery was hot and hostile; that of the galleries sympathetic and earnest, and they were crowded to excess; among their occupants were one or two judges and quite a large number of the legal fraternity, also many students from the college. The prisoner at the bar—for such he appeared to me—stepped promptly into the open space on the floor below the pulpit, and took his place at a small table, on which lay his books and papers. Flushed, and warm with the excitement of the occasion, but altogether master of the situation, he commenced his argument without fear or faltering. Moving on, from

proposition to proposition, and charge to charge, he defined, analyzed and argued the great theological questions presented, with all the subtle metaphysics involved in them, in a manner that at least commanded the admiration, if it did not win the votes, of his judges. The closing appeal left a profound impression on the large assembly, and was pronounced by the legal gentlemen present, as worthy of being ranked among the very best forensic efforts they had ever heard. The committee for the prosecution followed with their appeal, and on the following morning the votes were called. On *two* of the charges the accused was acquitted, but on *eight* he was found guilty, by majorities ranging from two to six.

Being found *guilty* of the errors specified, he was, logically at least, a convicted heretic, and should have been dealt with accordingly. But, either from the effect produced by the accused's final argument, or from some other cause not apparent on the record, the sentence pronounced carried no ecclesiastical thunder in it, but took this mild and harmless form, viz:

“*Resolved*, That Presbytery, at present, do not censure Mr. Duffield any *further* than *warn* him to guard against such speculations as may impugn the

doctrines of our Church ; and that he study to maintain the unity of the spirit in the Bond of Peace."

Briefly put, this judgment was, by the common sense of the people, thus paraphrased : "True, we find you guilty, but you may go ; only don't do so again."

This whole trial, viewed as a judicial proceeding, in the light of the advanced thought of the church of to-day, cannot but be construed not only as a violation of the constitutional principles of Presbyterian Church polity, but as an outrage (or, if that expression, in the presence of these revered and reverend gentlemen, sounds a little harsh, let us say a gross trespass) upon that freedom of thought and opinion that pre-eminently inheres in its widely cherished standards, and form of government. And yet, we cannot but think, that these learned and zealous divines, in the expression of this, their judgment, somehow imagined they were doing good service both to the Church, and the cause of truth ; they were so solemn and earnest in it all, that it is hard to think otherwise.

It may not be out of place, in dismissing this subject, here to quote the comments of some writer in the Philadelphia press of that time, upon this trial. He

says, among other things: "I feel perfectly confident that the cause for which Mr. Duffield here contended is that of truth, of revivals, of a dying world, and of God, and he will in the end triumph. For I expect without doubt to see the principles which he advocated spread, and ferment, and break up the foundations of many generations, and contribute to the increased activity and efficiency of churches that have slept for half a century."

It is hardly necessary to add that this prophecy has now for many years been fulfilled, and the doctrines of individual responsibility, a full and free atonement for every man through the passion and mystery of the cross—which, in this trial, were so ably vindicated by the reproved but triumphant preacher—are now (if we mistake not) the accepted views of the entire Presbyterian Church throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Enough has already been hinted to show that Mr. Duffield was a profound biblical student. Having attained the mastery of eight or nine different languages, he employed them all in his professional researches and studies. And in his manner of presenting truth, he showed himself not only a natural reasoner, but a scientific one. Thoroughly versed in

all the terms, modes and methods of logic, and familiar with all the various philosophies of the schools, he handled this rapier like a master.

He was, as I have already said, a meditative man. In the world of thought he foresaw drifts and tendencies; as in the case of transcendentalism and other *isms* which are latterly spoken of as the *broad views* of Christianity; still, he did not despise Philosophy, but hearkened to her voice whenever it was heard to speak. But he never was willing to sacrifice to Philosophy what he regarded and accepted as *Truth*. For that, and that always, both in the field of science, as well as thought, was his aim and his goal. He loved to sit at the feet of the Divine Man, Jesus, and learn of Him; instead of having Jesus sit at the feet of Philosophy, and of the wise men of the XIXth century. Hence it was, he derived the greater part of his strength; standing always *behind*, never in front of Him whom alone he believed to be "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

His convictions were always strong. His reason had guided his heart to them, as the result of his deepest and best inquiry, and he *believed* in them. And back of them lay a will, firm and brave enough to proclaim and enforce them in the face of all oppo-

sition. Where he conceived a great principle at stake, he could no more be moved than the rooted rock. Horace, in the sublimest passage he ever wrote, completes his picture of the “*justum et tenacem propositi virum*” (or man of principle), with the declaration that “not even *the great hand of thundering Jove could make him quail.” But here we have a man who not only attained this Horatian height, but who, climbing yet higher, had discovered that there is neither Prometheus, nor Ajax, in the Christian calendar; that the God in whose hand sleep the thunders is the very God of Right and Truth; so that their bolts can only be directed by Justice, while they are winged with Mercy, and clasped about with Love — that the man of *Christian* principle has nothing to fear from the Empyrean heights—nay more, through the Divine Spirit, he may actually ally himself with this God, and so stand above the angry world, fearless of all that man may do unto him. And what a height it is? Nevertheless we cannot but think, that he of whom we speak, *sometimes* at least, was a dweller on this consecrated Tabor of the Christian’s world.

He was a man of untiring energy. As I look back

*“*Nec fulminantis magna manus Jovis.*”

—Hor. Lib. III, Ode 3.

on his active ministry in Carlisle, from his thirtieth to his fortieth year particularly, I am amazed at the amount of his labors.

His own church membership was large, and scattered in all directions through that part of the Cumberland Valley. They required frequent visitation ; and the saddle was the only method of travel in those days ; buggies in that part of the country being as yet things not only unseen but unknown. And it was no rare exploit for him, on the back of his well-known and well-blooded horse, to make, in one day, more than fifty miles over those rough and hilly roads. On Sundays he invariably preached three times in his own church ;—first, the morning service, then after a brief interval, another sermon, and a third in the evening — besides looking in upon the Sunday-school ; and generally in the later hours of the afternoon, riding out some five or six miles into the country, and holding service in some thickly-settled locality, but invariably returning in time for night service at home. He most generally had a missionary or other meeting on Monday evening, a catechetical exercise with the young on Wednesday afternoon ; an expository lecture in the session-room every Wednesday evening ; church prayer meeting on Friday night ; a Bible-class for

ladies on Saturday afternoon, and in times of unusual religious excitement, a young convert's meeting, the latter mostly held in the parlors of his own house. This was at that time the continuous programme of his life, and never, that I can remember, relieved by a restful vacation or a journey from home. In addition to all this, he held, every winter, a series of what were called "protracted meetings," in his own church, and participated in others appointed in adjacent towns and villages. To these ordinary labors, should be added, his services in attending funerals through the borough; his toils and perplexities as one of the Trustees of Dickinson College; his volunteered and gratuitous instruction to various theological students, of whom he generally had two or three on his hands; his attendance on Presbytery and Synod in adjacent towns wholly unconnected by railroads; his special studies in the writing of books* and articles for the religious newspapers and reviews; his efforts on behalf of public education and the cause of Temperance, of which he was a very early and earnest advocate, and many other extraordinary duties, self-

*Among others, a volume of Psalms and Hymns published by George Fleming, of Carlisle, Penn.; and in later years several other volumes on different subjects.

assumed, to be sure, but involving large portions of time, and toil, and trouble. It was a busy and a burdensome life, but it had, as we have already seen, its abundant rewards. To him it seemed no task, but a pleasure thus to labor in the Master's vineyard ; as though he heard some whispering Angel say,

“Thine to work as well as pray,
Clearing thorny wrongs away ;
Plucking up the weeds of sin,
Letting Heaven's warm sunshine in.”

In his preaching he sought not the tricks of oratory, for, although his sermons were always written, their most eloquent passages came in his appeals after his book was closed. And often, when lecturing on special themes, such as the atonement, scriptural geology, astronomy, millenarianism, or other of the many topics he was wont to select for his Sunday night winter discourses, he charmed his audience with the flashes of a scholarly and truly genuine eloquence.

At communion seasons, his old parishioners will remember, he was peculiarly solemn and affecting ; seldom closing his remarks without tears, and leaving his people in the very companionship of the Master of the feast.

It is said that the distinguished Dr. John M. Mason

never appeared so great as on these occasions, and I have often wondered whether it was not from him, he received somewhat of this sacramental inspiration. There are those here present, who will recall some of these scenes, when (as was said of another) after having gone through the service, he went up from below; and giving out that hymn with which he always closed the exercises, he sat down wearied but satisfied, his pale face, with its dark and deeply-set eyes, looking out upon us all, "his whole countenance radiant and subdued." And when it was winter, and the church darkening, and the lights at the pulpit fell upon his face, throwing the rest of the assemblage into deeper shadow, the effect of his appeals, associated with the dignity, and I had almost said unearthly beauty of his countenance, was something never to be forgotten, by those who loved him. Indeed, I sometimes fancy, the vision even yet occasionally appears to the older members of his church, as these memorial feasts recur in the same manner, as when *he* was wont to take the bread and give it to his people, saying:

"Our Lord, on the *same* night in which he was betrayed, having taken bread, and blessed, and broken it, gave it to his disciples, as I, ministering in his name, give this bread unto you; saying, take, eat; this is

my body, which is broken for you ; this do, in remembrance of me ; for as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death, *till He come.*"

One strong point in his character ought not to be overlooked, and that was his firm belief in the brotherhood of men. To him, in the broadest and best sense, his fellow-man was also his *brother-man* ; not only in that sense of equality conferred by our political institutions, but because he was one endowed with an intelligent mind, and, still more, with an immortal soul. Consequently, the hard-handed and dusty laborer, the sooty-faced lad of the shop, the timid clerk of the counter, or the soil-worn sweeper of the streets, received from him a greeting quite as cordial as the man in his broadcloth and fine linen, or him who sat behind the trappings and show of liveried servants. He believed that Americans should always and everywhere maintain a national simplicity of manners, and had no sympathy with that sort of life which aped the ways of a land which bowed and cringed when "*quality*" passed by ! But it was his aim at all times, as far as possible, by his own simplicity of life and walk, his open and free intercourse with his fellow-citizens of every calling or

avocation, his unsparing denunciation of all shams and imitations of imperial and courtly ways, to frown down everything like incipient aristocracy among Americans; and *level up* to a fraternal equality the worthy citizen, no matter how lowly his lot or obscure his birth. To the very core, he accepted and adopted that noble sentiment of Scotland's greatest poet :

“The *rank* is but the guinea's stamp;
The *man's* the gold for a' that.”

All this brought him very near to the hearts of the “common people” (if this scriptural expression may be here allowed), and especially into full sympathy with *young men*, for whom he seemed to have an affection amounting almost to a *passion*. And his friends in this class were in all grades and departments of life; not a few were in the army and navy of the Country, especially in the days of the late war, many in our colleges and schools, and scores behind the counters and in the factories and workshops of the city. Like the yew tree, which, it is said, keeps fresh and green through centuries of time, because it is forever making a new heart, and shedding away what is old and worn at the surface, so was it ever with him and young men.

None were afraid to approach him for aid or counsel. With him, their secrets were as safe as though lodged in their mothers' bosoms, and they knew and relied upon it. And the impressions he thus made upon his young associates yet survive, and tell upon scores of men in the generation that succeeds his own.

Of Mr. Duffield's *patriotism*, it seems almost superfluous here to speak, so well was it known, not only in our city and State, but throughout the Country.

Born on Independence Day, five years only after the adoption of the Federal Constitution, of a lineage prominent on the American side, in the great struggle of the Revolution, his grandfather of his own name being one of those distinguished rebels for whose head the British had offered a large price, he grew up in the liberty-loving atmosphere of those days, and could not *fail* to be patriotic. His motto, so gracefully given on yonder window, was characteristic of his life, for "to God, his Country and his friends, he *was* ever faithful."*

During the critical period of our great Rebellion, and especially at its outbreak, his heart was agonized lest perchance the Union—to the music of which he had been rocked in infancy, and as a native of the Key-

*"Deo, Reipublicæ et amicis, esto semper fidelis!"

stone State, ever supremely devoted—should be rent like the veil of the temple, and in the end go down in blood under the aspiring flag of the slave power. His position, however, was instantly taken and well defined.

On the 20th of April, 1861, a scene occurred in front of the United States buildings in this city which yet lives in the memory of most of our older citizens. Treason had spoken in the fire which was opened on Fort Sumter upon the 12th, and the patriotic North was in a blaze of excitement. The first thing to be settled was the loyalty of Federal officers *at home*. Would they be true to the Union's flag, or would they refuse it a defence in this advancing struggle? A public meeting was called for the purpose of affording an opportunity for the civil, military and naval officers of the United States to renew their oaths in support of its Government. A stand had been erected on Griswold street, upon which were many of Detroit's prominent citizens, among them the Hon. Lewis Cass, Mayor Buhl presiding. In front were drawn up the military, naval and civil officers, all in citizens' dress, while beyond, the great mass of the people blockaded the streets and crowded the steps, roofs and windows of adjacent buildings. The meeting being called to

order, and "The Star Spangled Banner" having been sung with thrilling effect, the Hon. Ross Wilkins, of the United States District Court, appeared, introducing the Rev. Dr. Duffield, and, with great feeling, asked him to invoke the blessing of the Almighty upon the Country. He immediately stepped to the front, and the great multitude, as he assumed to voice their united prayers to Heaven, was hushed to silence. After an expression of adoration to God, as the Great Ruler among the Nations, and of thankfulness for the gift of His Son, he proceeded in the following earnest and lofty strain :

"We beseech Thee, O God, for the sake of Thy beloved Son (whom Thou hearest always), to pardon all our iniquities ; and suffer us here, in *His* name, to plead with Thee in behalf of our excited, afflicted and bleeding Country. O, Thou who art most righteous and holy, and who hast seen it just and fitting to let the demon of discord and war, unfurl his black and blood-stained banner in our beloved land, have mercy upon us. Let him not prevail to accomplish the destruction of our Government and Union. Arrest his march—turn back his troops—destroy his power, and save us from bloodshed, anarchy and ruin.

"Be Thou the fortress of our strength, the rock of

our salvation in our day of calamity and distress. Remember the years of old, when our *fathers* cried to Thee, and Thou didst deliver *them*. Cast us not off, though we, their offspring, may have forgotten Thee, and ungratefully abused Thy manifold mercies. Are we not still Thy people? And called by Thy name? For Jesus' sake, who died for us, abhor us not; but reach forth Thy hand and deliver us from the perils, the horrors and crimes of Civil War! Give to the President of these once happily United States, and to *all* that rule over us, wisdom and fidelity, to guide our affairs with courage, firmness and discretion, and to be successful in counsels, plans and efforts to repel invasion, suppress rebellion, and restore order, peace and harmony. Let Thy fear fall upon us, and upon our *enemies*, and, as far as we are in the right, stand by our armies and direct our fleets. Let no traitor be found in church, or State, army or navy, judiciary or constabulary, municipal authorities or police. And spare, oh, spare us, if it be Thy will, the shedding of blood.

“Have mercy on the seceding States, and our warring brethren. Allay their rage and frenzy. Let reason and religion recover ascendancy. Give them to see that in contending to perpetuate the slavery,

which they have declared shall be 'the corner stone of their Confederacy,' they fight not for Thee. Forgive, we humbly beseech Thee, such blasphemy and madness, and bring them to repentance.

"Let not anarchy rear its hydra-head, and lawlessness, violence and murder, revel in our land. Rebuke the raging tempest of human passion. Say to the dashing, thundering waves, 'Peace! be still!' and give us to see our loved and cherished Ship of State, with her star-spangled banner floating unrent upon the breeze, soon sail prosperously on a tranquil sea.

"O Lord, be gracious unto us. Help us to *wait* for Thee. Be *Thou* our arm every morning, and our salvation in this time of trouble. Give solemnity and force to the oath now to be administered to our officers. Take them, and all of us, under the shelter of Thy wing, that we may praise Thee now and evermore, through Jesus Christ, our only Lord and Saviour. Amen!"

The oath was then taken in all solemnity; again the national airs were sung, the benediction pronounced, and the assembly slowly dispersed to their homes. Not a single speech was made, General Cass remarking that it was altogether too solemn an occasion for speech-making. The prayer seemed to be all that was becoming, and all that was desired.

This high-water mark of Mr. Duffield's patriotism never lowered through the entire struggle. His voice was ever for the Government, the Union, and National liberty. He put the National banner into the hands of his two sons, and sent them with his and their mother's blessing, to the field. And when, under some sudden and calamitous reverse of the Federal arms, the people were summoned by a National proclamation to observe a day of "fasting, humiliation and prayer," he was ever ready with brave words of encouragement and hope. And as his hearers, with drooping hearts and heads, slowly gathered to their pews, and listened to his earnest prayers and soul-stirring appeals, their hearts grew strong again, and their faith brightened with their faces; so that as they left the sanctuary, under the organ strains of some National anthem, they marched forth as though the shouts of coming victory were already in the air.

It was his great satisfaction that he was permitted to live long enough to see the "Nation, under God, receive its new birth of Freedom," and its flag again afloat, over an unbroken and enduring Union.

But I forbear. His surviving friends *well know* that his heart was his Country's to its every drop, and were they to utter their judgment, they would say—

“ He did love

His Country's *good*, with a respect more tender,
More holy, and profound than *his own life*.”

Without tarrying to speak of his devotion to the natural sciences, and the extent of his studies therein, his special interest and efforts on behalf of schools and colleges, and particularly our own University (of which he was an early and laborious Regent for nine years), and his many contributions to the secular press, looking to the development of the material interests of the State, and particularly of the Upper Peninsula, and the Northern Pacific Railroad, I notice, in conclusion, but one more trait of his character—and that not the least worthy, his broad, *Christian charity*.

If any one, by reason of his occasional controversial discourses, supposed or judged him to have been a severe and narrow sectarian, they were greatly in error. To be sure, he loved Presbyterianism. It was the

NOTE.—None who were present will ever forget the Sunday night that Detroit was threatened by a rebel invasion from Canadian territory, when, at the close of the service in his own church, and just before pronouncing the benediction, he gave notice, with flashing eye and strong, unfaltering voice, that if the attack should be made, “ The ringing of yonder bell would be the signal for every loyal citizen to be in his place and repel it.”

Church of his sires for generations back, and as he understood it, he found in its form of government a larger and better protected Christian liberty, than in that of any other denomination. Though always a robust opponent of sectarian exclusiveness and pretension, he never dis-esteemed other Christian organizations. On the contrary, his hand was ever extended in fraternal fellowship, to all who recognized *Christ* as the One Great Head of the Church. His theology might be briefly and well described, or defined, as *Christology*; and wherever that banner waved or its bugle sounded, he was ready to enlist. Many times have I seen and heard him upon the Methodist camp-meeting platforms, in the groves of the Cumberland Valley, as they were wont to be held in those early days; and also participating with the Baptists in this and other cities, while special meetings were being conducted by *this* denomination. It was to the salvation of souls, that his heart seemed consecrated, and wherever there was work of that sort to be done, he was not only ready but anxious to serve. Nor did this breadth of Christian charity come to him, as with many, only in the later and mellow years of life. It flashed out early from his lips and pen; and in days, too, when the robes of sectarianism were drawn close,

and a Pharisaic sort of superior holiness that had come down from former generations, marked a majority of the denominational ministry. As early as his 35th year, he both preached and published, among other opinions, the following, bearing on this very point.

These are some of his words :

“It sometimes happens that ministers aim at the mere *mental* illumination of their hearers, or their entertainment or gratification. These are all unhal-
lowed ends when made supreme, and will vitiate the service. Nor is theirs any better who seek in the spirit of sectarianism to swell their numbers, or in the spirit of proselytism, to seduce from other denominations. God does not commission or employ ministers to labor for their *sect*. The Bible knows nothing of sect, except the one ‘every where spoken against,’ the *true* followers of Christ. To increase *their* number, should be the aim of the ministry, and they who manifest more zeal for *sect*, than to bring sinners to *Him*, have forgotten their commission and will receive no plaudit from Heaven for their labor. It is truly pitiable to witness the expenditure of time, labor, funds and feeling, which is made in the spirit of sectarianism! The Presbyterian, and Episcopalian, and Methodist,

and Baptist banners, are to be seen floating in almost every direction; and the cry for recruits is heard on every breeze; but alas! how often, instead of enlisting good soldiers for Jesus Christ, is it to be seen that the *sect* is first, and Christ next. This is a most baleful spirit. He brings sinners to Himself, here and there, wherever the truth is preached, regardless of ecclesiastical organizations. Shall we then exalt the mere ecclesiastical organization—which is, unquestionably, a thing of human device in many of its formal rites and usages—above the fellowship of God's dear saints, and show more devotion to the interests of a sect, than to those of the precious 'flock' of God? If we do we are not co-operating with Him, but are exalting *our* plan and aim above His. Let the grand aim be to *convert sinners*, to bring souls to Jesus, and not to marshal the forces of a sect. It is certainly a matter of comparative unimportance, provided the sinner is truly converted, in what ecclesiastical connexion he may eventually be found. By acting in the spirit of sectarianism, we do virtually and formally contribute to perpetuate and justify the infidel reproach of Christianity,—that it is a schismatic and litigious thing. And worse still, we frustrate our Redeemer's prayers. He prayed for *His*

people, not only for the Apostles, but ‘for them *also* which should believe on Him through their word ;’ ‘that they may be *one*,’ ‘perfect in one,’ and that ‘the world may know that Thou hast sent me.’ Never till the spirit of sectarianism, and schism, and strife is banished from among the friends and ministers of Christ, can the world have this proof of the divinity of His religion, or the ministry its full efficacy and success. We are *not* the ministers of a sect. Nor do our commissions carry us within the range exclusively of a particular church or denomination. We are ambassadors for God to a *guilty world*, and the terms of our commission direct us to ‘go into *all* the world, and preach the *Gospel* to every creature.’

“If we shall be censured for thus saying, and our sentiments be misrepresented as proofs of hostility to ‘creeds’ and ‘confessions of faith,’ and of alienation towards our own ecclesiastical sect, we shall regret, but cannot help it. We cannot keep back, what appears to us to be *the truth*, and so highly important to extensive ministerial success. We shall be traduced and slandered if men *will* propagate such inferences from our remarks. They are not legitimate and we disavow them.”

He had already discerned, in the words of another, that "Protestantism had apparently turned the goal of its age of separations, and was already moving on toward Catholicity." And "he who does not perceive the undercurrent of life which is to-day carrying all sects out toward one broad communion—who would strengthen the barriers of sectarianism, or provincial theologies against it—must be blind to one of the most glorious providences of our generation, and dull of hearing to one of the clearest calls to go forward which has come in any century" to the common Christian Church.

But these same sentiments blossomed forth still more beautifully in the last hour of his life. He was delivering, in the First Methodist church of this city, an "Address of Welcome" to the delegates of the World's Convention of Young Men's Christian Associations, on the 24th of June, 1868; and again he was heard urging and illustrating these same broad views. Among other words he then said, were these: "We have but one Sun of Righteousness, and but one bright heaven above us." * * * "Whether Christians of the Dominion north and east of our border, or Christians of the United Kingdom of Great

Britain, Scotland and Ireland, or of any *other* Nation, we are all *one* in Christ—bound together in the higher unity of our Lord, of whom the *whole family*, in Heaven and on earth, is named. Here, at this border point, as when the earth passes through the great plains of meteoric showers, we for a little season, have come in close contact. Let us for the time being merge together in one great Christian galaxy; forgetting every other distinction save that which pertains to the one great Church above, and below;”—

But—he was not permitted to finish the address. The winged messenger came and touched him while he spake, and the veteran standard-bearer, after fifty years of service, fainted and fell. Strong-armed friends bore him upon their shoulders to his home. Expiring nature struggled for a day or two; detaining him until he could drop his mantle and his message upon his first-born, saying, “henceforth *you* must preach for me;” and then, with his elders and associate pastors standing round his bed (as the Council stood round the bed of the dying Calvin), the immortal spirit took its final flight.

Devout men carried him to the shades of Elmwood, where stands his monument, bearing, among others,

this inscription, cut in the old classic languages he so loved to study, but which, translated, reads thus :

“ Here lies buried, in the hope of the
first resurrection,

GEORGE DUFFIELD,

Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Carlisle,
Penn'a, for twenty years ;

Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Detroit
for thirty years.

A man pure in life, holy in piety, imbued with learning ; in discourse, in spirit and in faith
an example among the faithful.”

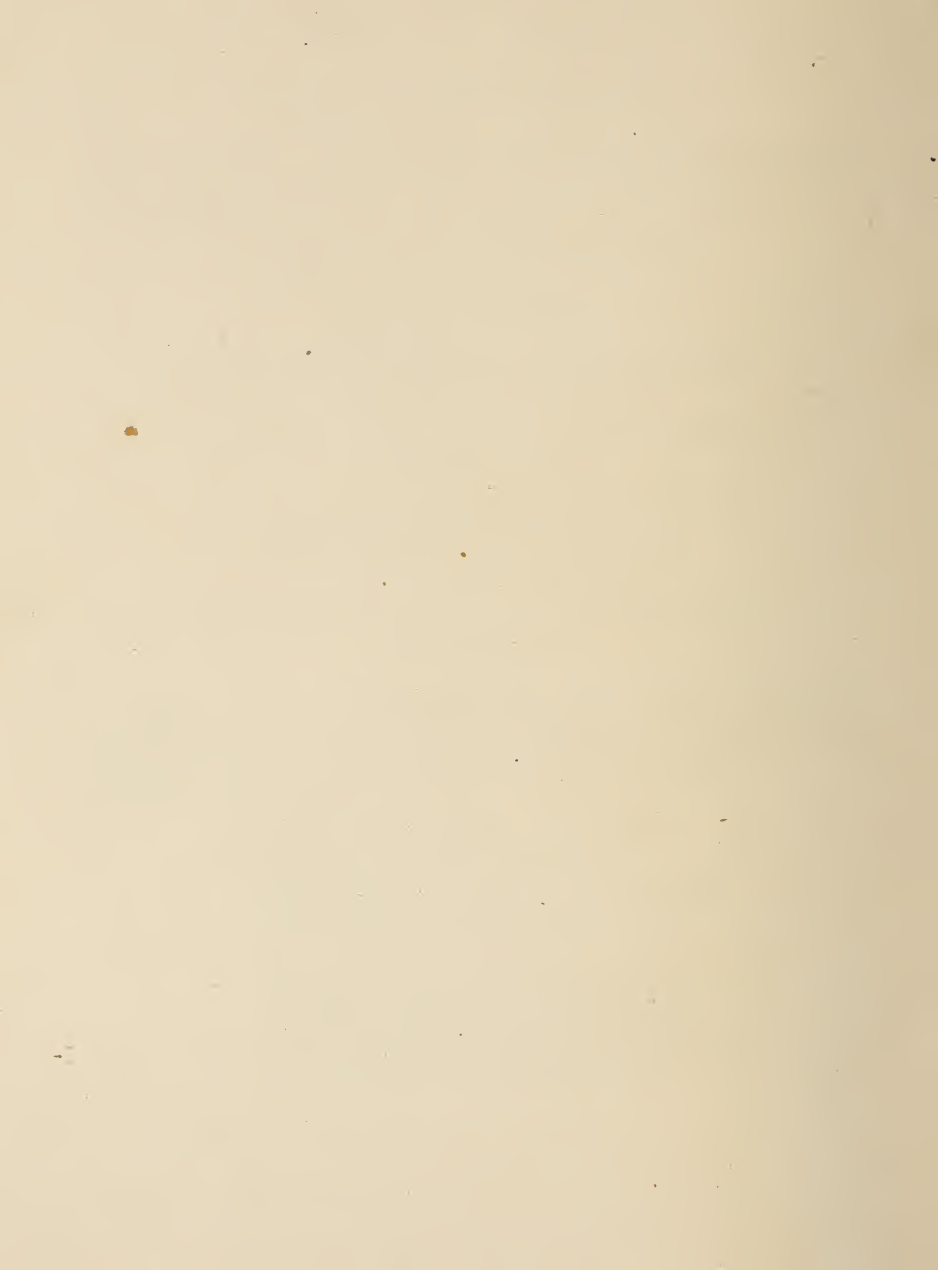
“ After he had served his generation, by the will of
God, he fell asleep.”

And now, in closing this discourse, and while his presence is yet bright in the memory of many of us, may we not, in all truthfulness, say of him,

“ He said not to his Lord, as if afraid,
‘ Here is thy talent in a napkin laid ;’
But labored in his sphere, as men who live,
In the delight that work alone can give.

Peace be to thee ! eternal peace and rest ;
And the fulfillment of that great behest,
‘ Ye have been faithful over a few things,
Over ten cities shall ye reign as kings.’ ”





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